

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 SAM-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 OMB-01 AID-20 SSC-01

DRC-01 /110 W

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5743

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, GR

SUBJ: PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS SET FOR NOVEMBER 17

REFERENDUM ON KING WITHIN FORTY-FIVE DAYS THEREAFTER

REF ATHENS 7167

1. SUMMARY. GOG ANNOUNCED GENERAL ELECTIONS ON NOVEMBER 17 FOR PARLIAMENT WITH POWERS TO REVISE CONSTITUTION TO BE FOLLOWED BY REFERENDUM ON QUESTION OF MONARCHY OR REPUBLIC WITHIN FORTY-FIVE DAYS. PRESENT GOVERNMENT SCHEDULED TO RESIGN NEXT WEEK TO BE REPLACED BY CARETAKER GOVERNMENT UNDER CARAMANLIS. MAVROS AND AVEROFF EXPECTED TO RETAIN CABINET POSITIONS. PM WILL MAKE OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT TO NATION OCTOBER 3 OVER NATIONAL RADIO/TV. END SUMMARY.

2. PM CARAMANLIS CHAIRED CABINET MEETING OCTOBER 2 IN EVENING SEVERAL HOURS AFTER DEPUTY PM AND FM GEORGE MAVROS RETURNED FROM U.S. CABINET DECIDED CONDUCT ELECTIONS FOR PARLIAMENT NOVEMBER 17.

CABINET APPROVED CONSTITUENT ACT PROVIDING FOR REFEREDUM TO DECIDE FORM OF STATE STRUCTURE TO BE ANNOUNCED FIFTEEN DAYS AFTER ELECTIONS AND HELD AT LATEST THIRTY DAYS THEREAFTER.

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ELECTIONS WILL BE CONDUCTED BY CARETAKER GOVERNMENT UNDER CARAMANLIS

WHICH WILL BE FORMED SHORTLY.

3. SEMI-OFFICIAL ATHENS NEWS AGENCY REPORTED CARAMANLIS OPENED CABINET MEETING WITH STATEMENT THAT PRESENT GOVERNMENT WAS OF SPECIAL CHARACTER IN THAT IT DID NOT DRAW POWER FROM EITHER REVOLUTION OR PEOPLE DIRECTLY BUT FROM ARMED FORCES AT TIME WHEN THEY REFLECTED POPULAR WILL. CONSEQUENTLY GOVERNMENT COULD BE ONLY OF SHORT DURATION,

AND HE PROPOSED ELECTIONS FOR NOVEMBER 3 OR NOVEMBER 10 AT LATEST. PM DISMISSED ALLEGATIONS THAT GOG WAS ACCEL RATING ELECTIONS DATE BY NOTING CAMPAIGN BEGAN IN ESSENCE FROM DAY THAT PRESENT GOVERNMENT FORMED. PM NOTED IN OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES ELECTIONS FOLLOW TWENTY DAYS AFTER ANNOUNCEMENT.

4. PM TOLS CABINET THAT EARLY ELECTIONS WERE NECESSARY FOR NUMBER OF REASONS: (A) PRESENT GOVERNEMENT HAS TRANSITIONAL, PRE-ELECTORAL CHARACTER WITHOUT PLAN BEYOND RESTORING FREE INSTITUTIONS, (B) GREECE'S ENTRY INTO EUROPEAN ORGANIZATIONS AND ITS INTERNATIONAL PRESTIGE AND CREDIT CALLED FOR GOVERNEMTT WITH POWER

DERIVED FROM PEOPLE. (CARAMANLIS STRESSED HE PERSONALLY WAS NOT WILLING TO EXERCISE POWER UNLESS IT CAME FROM PEOPLE), (C) UNTIL ELECTIONS PROPER FOUNDATIONS FOR SAFE AND PERMANENET DEMOCRACY COULD NOT BE LAID. PREMIER REGRETTED CERTAIN CIRCLES WERE TRYING TO CREATE CLIMATE OF POLITICAL TENSION WHICH RECALLED MENTALITY EXISTING PRIOR TO 1967. "DESPITE ALL THIS I NOURISH OPTIMISTIC CONVICTION THAT COUNTRY'S POLICTICAL FORCES, IN THEIR MAJORITY, WILL RISE TO THE HEIGHT OF CIRCUMSTANCES AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE COUNTRY'S BEING LED, IN A CALM AND DECISIVE WAY, TO ELECTIONS WHICH CONSTITUTE THE BRILLIANT CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT OF THE EFFORTS OF THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT FOR THE RETURN OF DEMOCRACY TO GREECE."

5. FOLLOWING CABINET DISCUSSION OF PM'S PROPOSALS IT VOTED UNANIMOUSLY AFTER TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION DEPUTY PM MAVROS' ABSENCES

ABROAD AND INSUFFICIENT TIME TO ORGANIZE CENTER UNION THAT ELECTIONS SHOULD BE HELD ON NOVEMBER 17.

6. COMMENT: AS REPORTED REFTEL, GEO. MAVROS AND EVANGELOS AVEROFF ARE EXPECTED TO RETAIN POSITIONS AS FONMIN AND DEFMIN
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IN CARETAKER GOVET. UNDER CARAMANLIS.
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